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 cret, and it was only by chance that they discovered it, when already too late to warn all the settlers.

How it was thwarted.

Perrier, learning that the former had had some difficulty with Diron d'Artaguette, King's-lieutenant and commandant at Fort Maubile, invited the chiefs of the whole nation to meet him at New Orleans, with the prospect of giving them complete satisfaction as to all their complaints. They came, and after explanations given by them on the matter which had summoned them, they told the Commandant-General that the nation was delighted at his sending an officer to reside in their country, and at his inviting them to come and see him. They said no more, but returned strongly inclined: 1st. To break their word with the Chickasaws, to whom they had promised to destroy all the settlements depending on Fort Maubile. 2nd. To act-so as to enable the Natchez to execute their project. This the Natchez have since reproached them to their face in presence of the French, without their venturing to deny it. We have never doubted that their design was to force us to call upon them, and by this means, profit by what we would give them to secure their co-operation, and by the booty they would take from the Natchez.

Treachery of the Choctaws and confidence of the French.

The Commandant-General was thus unconsciously on the point of seeing one portion of the colony destroyed by enemies whom he did not mistrust, and betrayed by allies on whom he supposed he could depend, and who were in fact one of his great resources, but who wished to profit by our misfortunes. Moreover, it was all the easier for those whom the Chickasaws had won over, to succeed in their project, as no French settlement had any defence against a surprise and sudden attack. There were forts indeed, in some places, but except that at Maubile, they were only stockades, two thirds of which were decayed, and had they been in a state of defence, they could protect from the fury of the Indians only a small number of the nearest dwellings. Everywhere, too, men lay in perfect security, which would have enabled these savages to massacre all the French, even in the best-guarded places,